

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, February 20, 2018 at 4:30 pm in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

PRESENT: Chair Erickson, Duane Pierce, Ed Koslowski, Louise Dahlke, Joan Brusky, Jerry Polus, Kerry Metoxen

EXCUSED: Delores Pierce

1. **Call Meeting to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 4:30 pm.

2. **Approve/Modify Agenda.**

Duane Pierce pointed out that the agenda should be dated February 20, not February 21.

Motion made by Joan Brusky, seconded by Duane Pierce to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. **Approve/Modify Minutes of January 16, 2018.**

Motion made by Duane Pierce, seconded by Ed Koslowski to approve. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. **Update re: Honor Rewards Program.**

CVSO Jerry Polus reported 285 veterans have received cards to participate in the Honor Rewards program. In addition, there are 83 local businesses participating. Koslowski asked if there was any sort of printed material he could provide to businesses he goes into regarding the program and encouraging them to sign up. It was suggested to add a PDF on the website that could be printed off when needed to be handed out to businesses. Erickson also suggested making a small poster to be put up at different locations, including the various military locations.

5. **Discussion re: 2018 Veterans' Appreciation Day at the Brown County Fair, including what group to honor (AR/NG).**

Erickson said he mentioned honoring the Reserves and National Guard at this year's event at the Fair to a few people and the idea seemed to go over very, very well.

At this time Polus introduced Kerry Metoxen to the group.

Erickson said he from a number of veterans that they come to the Appreciation Day and he advised them that this year's event has been changed to Sunday and that one of the advantages of that is the reduced admission price which is helpful for those who want to bring family members with them. Erickson said we would have to go around to the local reserve units with information that they could post so they are aware of the event and have plenty of advanced notice. Koslowski agreed that honoring the Reserves and National Guard was a good idea and he was in favor of it. Polus added that the posters are ready several months in advance of the event and we could take them around personally to the various units in town.

Brusky recalled at the last meeting we talked about including Brown County's 200th Anniversary in the event somehow. Erickson said dog tags are usually handed out to those veterans being honored and he suggested

including something about the 200th Anniversary on one side of the dog tags and then having the information about the group we are honoring on the other side.

Polus said since we know the event will take place on August 19 and that we are honoring the Reserves and National Guard, he will start working on the poster. The timeline was briefly discussed and it was decided that the event will run from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm, with the ceremony being held at 3:00. The band was also discussed and Erickson suggested Koslowski check to see if the band we have had the past few years would be available again this year. Polus also noted that he can reach out again to the Air Force Band and the Army Band but noted in the past they would only commit 60 days out.

Dahlke said fliers will be going out to print at the beginning of April and she will be sure the information on the Veterans Appreciation Day will be included. She said the Fair is hoping to put the veterans in the same spot they were in last year. The Fair will provide water, lemonade and cookies as in the past. Dahlke will also make arrangements for the stage for the band. Koslowski asked if the Fair could get any banners since the date was changed from Saturday to Sunday so the current banners we have are outdated. Dahlke said she will look into that and keep the subcommittee updated. Dahlke also indicated the light up sign she mentioned at an earlier meeting is still available if this group wants it. The sign is currently being stored at the UW Extension and arrangements were made for Koslowski and Pierce to go look at the sign with Dahlke.

6. Report of CVSO Jerry Polus.

Polus reported that his senior benefits specialist is leaving his office for a job in another county. She will be hard to replace and the job has been posted, but Polus said they have another staff member who has developed quickly who may be promoted in to that position.

7. Reports from Committee Members Present (Erickson, Brusky, Dahlke, Haskins, Koslowski, Pierce).

-Erickson did not have anything to report other than what was discussed above.

-Brusky talked about Senate Bill, 732 and Senate Bill 666, which concerns a pilot program to provide outreach, support and mental and substance abuse services for veterans or active military. Polus said this is similar to the VORP program which deals with at risk and homeless veterans to help coordinate service which includes mental health program.

Brusky also said she had recently seen a news report that the numbers of veterans receiving hospice services. Twenty five percent of the patients Unity Hospice cares for are veterans and these veterans want to share their experiences and stories about the service and they feel they can do that best with another veterans because this tends to bring a sense of closure and release at the end of life. Unity Hospice has reached out to local veterans organizations to recruit volunteers and to date there have been five veterans how have gone through Unity's training program to become a Comrade in Comfort. Unity is receiving new requests each week and anyone interested in volunteering can call 1-800-992-9249 for more information.

Brusky concluded by talking about a boat show coming up February 22 – 25 at American Marine and Motor Sports in Shawano. People are encouraged to bring items to donate to homeless veterans through the Hands Foundation. They are specifically looking for thermal underwear, hooded sweatshirts, wool socks, winter coats and winter boots.

-Dahlke did not have anything else to report other than what she talked about earlier.

-Koslowski asked if there were any updates on the Old Glory Honor Flight of Champions coming up in November. Polus said he attended the fundraising gala at Lambeau Field and it was very nice. He will be meeting with County Executive Troy Streckenbach in the next few weeks to talk further about this but at this time things are moving along quite well. Brusky asked about the selection process and Polus explained

there is currently a waiting list of about 600 people and there are four to five flights each year. The application process was explained and it was also explained that from time to time people get bumped closer to the top of the list for special circumstances. The Flight of Champions committee continues to solicit funds for the flight and Polus noted that prior to the gala, \$50,000 had been raised.

Polus said Old Glory Honor Flight really wants a large group at the airport to welcome home the veterans. Pierce said he is working on passing the word on that and will continue to do so. Erickson also said he has been talking about this while he is out campaigning and his constituents are very excited about it as well. Polus will continue to keep this group advised of developments on the Flight of Champions.

Koslowski continued that his vets post will be having a meat raffle at Pearly Gates on February 24 at 2:00 pm. Pierce also added that his post will be having a meat raffle at the Goal Post on March 10 at 4:00 pm.

-Pierce said a Connect to Courage event will be held on March 20, 2018 at Fox Valley Technical College. The event is designed to raise awareness and education about the trauma and challenges that veterans and law enforcement and public safety personnel face every day. A number of groups and resources will be on hand to provide information and there will be a number of speakers as well as QPR training which is designed to educate people what to do with those they find on the brink of suicide.

Erickson asked Kerry Metoxen if he had any news or information share. Metoxen thanked Polus for inviting him and for all he does. He noted that Oneida has a committee very similar to this committee and he will probably come back to this group in the future. Metoxen mentioned the Purple Heart vets from Oneida have been involved in the Appreciation Day event at the Failure the last few years. Metoxen said he did 20 years active duty in the Air Force. The group welcomed Metoxen and indicated they were glad to have him here.

8. **Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law.** None.

9. **Adjourn.**

Motion made by Ed Koslowski, seconded by Duane Pierce to adjourn at 5:26 pm. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio
Administrative Specialist